



Community & Residential Services Authority

MEMBERS PRESENT

Springfield Location:

David Elder	Susan Fonfa	Seth Harkins	Juliana Harms
Merlin Lehman	Gary Seelbach	Maureen Haugh-Stover	Julie Stremlau
Randy Staton			

Chicago Location: (attending by Video conference)

Lisa Betz	Robert Bloom	Toni Hoy	Brittany Stern
-----------	--------------	----------	----------------

MEMBERS ABSENT

Kathy Briseno	Michele Carmichael	William Delgado	Candice Jones
Dee Ann Ryan			

STAFF PRESENT

Springfield Location:

Nancy Aguirre	Mindy Miller	Linda Prewitt	John Schornagel
Debbi Smith			

Chicago Location: (attending by Video conference)

Robert Watts

LIAISONS PRESENT

None

GUESTS

Uli Senz

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Staton called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Members, CRSA staff and guests introduced themselves.

II. APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 8, 2015 AUTHORITY MINUTES

The Authority reviewed the minutes of the October 8, 2015 Authority meeting.

MOTION: Gary Seelbach moved and Robert Bloom seconded that the minutes of the October 8, 2015 Authority meeting be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

III. STAFF REPORT

Director Schornagel referenced the following informational handouts:

- **Staff Activity Reports** for October and November of 2015: Director Schornagel reported to the Authority that since the last meeting in October, two cases were placed at Staff Review status, both involving custody relinquishment risk. He reported that in one case the child was placed with a birth parent in another state "rehomed", and in the other case the family was awarded a residential ICG. He added that there are currently no cases at the Staff Review level.

IV. AGENCY REPORTS

Randy Staton informed the Authority that DHS/DRS will pay Home Service Individual Providers overtime over 40 hours per week. However, Individual Providers working for Home Services Program (HSP) customers should not work more than 40 hours a work week, unless the customer is approved. The customer and the Individual Provider are responsible for monitoring work hours to ensure he/she does not work more than 40 hours a week unless approved by HSP Central Office. He added that Individual Providers who do not comply, will no longer be funded through HSP and will not be permitted to serve customers and that continued non-compliance may result in a change in the customer's level of care or service provider.

V. OLD BUSINESS

None

VI. NEW BUSINESS

None

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Ad Hoc Staff Evaluation Committee

Chairperson Staton reported that the Staff Evaluation Committee has completed the performance evaluation of Executive Director Schornagel, who has reviewed the evaluation and discussed the results with Chairperson Staton. Chairperson Staton stated that the evaluation was very favorable and included recommendations for Director Schornagel during the coming year. He added that the evaluation will be made available to Authority members as requested. Chairperson Staton thanked fellow Committee members Seth Harkins, Juliana Harms and Gary Seelbach for serving on the Committee.

B. Ad Hoc Custody Relinquishment Issues Committee

Director Schornagel reported that the newly formed Ad Hoc Custody Relinquishment Issues Committee has convened twice in November and December 2015. He informed the Authority that the Committee reviewed a recently completed a 16-month audit of CRSA "CR-risk" cases and concluded that the CRSA's CR-risk case data is too limited to satisfy the Committee's need to help document the statewide prevalence of CR-risk cases. He added that gathering statewide Custody Relinquishment prevalence data by any means necessary will be an ongoing focus of the CR Issues Committee. Director Schornagel also reported that the CR Issues Committee will continue to seek clarity about the barriers to implementation of Public Act: 98-0808 (the Custody Relinquishment Prevention Act) and to advocate for full implementation of the Act, through which CR-risk cases can be processed and resolved. Director Schornagel further reported that the CR Issues Committee recommends that the CRSA continue to prioritize and expedite staff technical assistance and board level dispute resolution activities to CR-Risk families until the Custody Relinquishment Prevention Act is fully implemented.

Director Schornagel advised the Authority about recent communications with DCFS regarding the possibility of DCFS updating to CRSA regarding implementation of Public Act: 98-0808, in conjunction with the CRSA meeting dates in January or February of 2016.

C. Executive Committee

Chairperson Staton informed the Authority that in addition to receiving an update and recommendations from the Ad Hoc Staff Evaluation Committee which was covered earlier in this agenda, the Executive Committee processed reports and recommendations from the Ad Hoc Multiple Agency Resource Pool Committee, the Ad Hoc Procedural Guidelines Committee and the newly formed Ad Hoc Custody Relinquishment Issues Committee. He commented that the majority of the December Executive Committee meeting was spent discussing how the Authority should be responding to the ongoing service and funding shortfalls experienced by CRSA clients. Director Schornagel noted that the point of convergence for those Ad Hoc Committees is the apparent absence of multiple-agency dialogue and activity pertaining to service planning and delivery for CRSA populations, as well as, the related pressures that these shortfalls are placing on the CRSA Technical Assistance and Dispute Resolution processes. He observed that the political paralysis and service funding shortfalls are most clearly seen in CRSA's caseload by families who feel forced by systemic circumstances to relinquish their parental rights to acquire needed behavioral health supports and services. Gary Seelbach advised that the Executive Committee supports the formation of a CRSA *Crisis Intervention Decision Making Referral Committee* to augment staff technical assistance and Board-level dispute resolution activities to CR-risk families. He added that the Ad Hoc Custody Relinquishment Issues Committee has recommended that CRSA assign priority status to psychiatric lock-out cases which can lead to custody relinquishment and should explore ways through the dispute resolution process for CRSA member agencies to become constructively engaged so that CR-risk cases could be resolved within 2 months of referral.

MOTION: *Gary Seelbach moved on behalf of the Custody Relinquishment Issues Committee that the Authority assign priority status to psychiatric lock-out cases which could lead to custody relinquishment and expedite CRSA technical assistance and dispute resolution proceedings so that CR-risk cases could be resolved within 2 months of referral.*

In the ensuing discussion Robert Bloom disagreed with this approach asserting that the appropriate approach to CR-risk cases is for CRSA to apply pressure on relevant state agencies to fully implement PA: 98-0808. Michele Carmichael commented that CRSA should be encouraging member agencies to identify CR-risk situations before they become crisis situations and to respond to case challenges pre-emptively to prevent psychiatric lock-outs and related custody relinquishments. Merlin Lehman questioned the appropriateness of the Authority prioritizing the needs of one CRSA sub-population over any other sub-population. Debbi Smith addressed procedural and informational limitations of CRSA's dispute resolution process and expressed concern that such a prioritization undermines well established CRSA Service Principles and disrupts the orderly administration of the Dispute Resolution process. Having no second for the Motion on the floor Chairperson Emeritus David Elder suggested that Gary Seelbach withdraw his Motion and consider an alternative motion. Gary Seelbach withdrew his motion. The Authority renewed its commitment to better understand the barriers to the implementation of Public Act: 98-0808 and to actively advocate for full implementation of that Act through any means necessary. The Authority also expressed its ongoing interest

in obtaining statewide custody relinquishment prevalence data from DCFS through any channel available to better define CR-risk population and its needs.

There was consensus on the Authority that the next custody relinquishment-related challenge is to succinctly define the CR-risk population(s) of interest to CRSA, noting the breadth of the custody relinquishment population as a whole and the more narrow custody relinquishment sub-population(s) that comes to the attention of CRSA. Lisa Betz opined that the Authority's interest should be limited to children with diagnosed mental health disorder(s). Susan Fonfa indicated HFS' interest lies only with children who are Medicaid eligible. Toni Hoy commented on behalf of the CR-Issues Committee that publicly adopted children who are being forced into DCFS guardianship a second time are a population of interest to CRSA. Director Schornagel commented that any Illinois child with a disability(s) which impacts behavioral health, who is pending possible remand to DCFS through the courts to address public safety risk and/or who cannot obtain needed publicly or privately funded services are eligible for CRSA services, and as such are populations of concern to CRSA.

Director Schornagel further stated that staff has already placed priority on CR-risk cases and continues to explore ways to engage CRSA member agencies more quickly to facilitate case-by-case solutions. He reminded the Authority that numerous CRSA Ad Hoc Committees are currently focused on ways to expedite the Dispute Resolution Process without abandoning core tenets of the process and that the Authority is poised to create and empower a Crisis Intervention Decision Making Referral Committee to address urgent cases. He added the recent CRSA CR-risk survey data indicates that the Authority is on the right track with CR-risk cases. He also indicated that CRSA staff will continue to bring custody relinquishment risk cases to the attention of relevant Authority members for action through existing CRSA Service Procedural Guidelines and will continue to expedite technical assistance and dispute resolution activities to the extent practicable to forestall relinquishments.

MOTION: *David Elder moved and Gary Seelbach seconded that the Authority authorize Director Schornagel to communicate as necessary with relevant agencies to request Custody Relinquishment data and to suggest additional actions to address the needs of the Custody Relinquishment Risk population. If those requests for data and action are insufficient, Director Schornagel will bring the issue back to the Authority for further action. The Motion carried unanimously.*

VIII. OPEN DIALOUGE

CRSA Regional Coordinators Debbi Smith and Linda Prewitt expressed thanks on behalf of their clients to Robert Bloom and his fellow colleagues at the University of Illinois at Chicago for arranging to perform no-cost psychological evaluations for parents involved with CRSA. Dr. Bloom commented that the intent of his colleagues is to fill the diagnostic gap identified by CRSA staff to acquire psychological evaluations of sufficient quality to help CRSA clients to apply for needed services from CRSA member agencies and public schools in a timely manner. CRSA staff indicated that they will be contacting Dr. Bloom to work out logistics on a case by case basis.

IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Uli Senz commented that that Ray Connor and others have observed that the contracting ICG program forced many families of kids with high end mental health needs towards DCFS and the relinquishment of their parental rights in pursuit of appropriate mental health services for their children. This resulted in Rep. Sara Feigenholtz sponsoring PA: 98 0808 to initiate processes for families to find less intrusive and disruptive solutions.

X. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Merlin Lehman moved and Gary Seelbach seconded that the Authority meeting be adjourned at 10:52 a.m. The Motion carried unanimously